



ALLIANCE PARTNER NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2023



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CAREERS IN SPORTS: PR & Comms

Working on a professional sports club's communications team, your main job responsibilities involve facilitating the distribution of club news and information to media members and key audiences. Throughout a typical week during the season, we handle interview requests for our players and coaches while also promoting our upcoming match with local media members. Whenever you see your favorite players, a coach, or a member of the staff speaking on the local news about the Spirit, our communications team probably helped to make it happen!

There are also a number of less exciting activities that are just as important to the club: verifying player statistics that help inform social media content, sharing injury reports, setting up post-match press conferences, and much more. We also provide important materials to our broadcast partners so that television personalities are as well-informed on the Spirit as possible.

We want to make sure that as many people are aware of when the Spirit is playing at home so we can help fill up Audi Field to cheer on our players. The ticketing staff isn't the only one helping fans fill the stadium on gameday; it's a true team effort.

On matchday, some of our responsibilities include setting up the press box (where



the media watches and covers the game) and press conference spaces (where our coaches and players speak to the media following the match), ensuring that our media members all have the necessary credentials to enter the stadium, blocking off space around the field for photographers and videographers, and helping to get the visiting team's communications staff settled in once they arrive. While it seems simple, putting on a smile and being a good host to our guests – whether it's media members or staff from the opposing team – is important in cultivating an environment where people can work at their best.

After each match, members of the communications team help to facilitate the interviews with players and coaches you see on TV with the match commentators as well as the press conference with our committed members of the media where you hear players talk about the match. Much of the footage

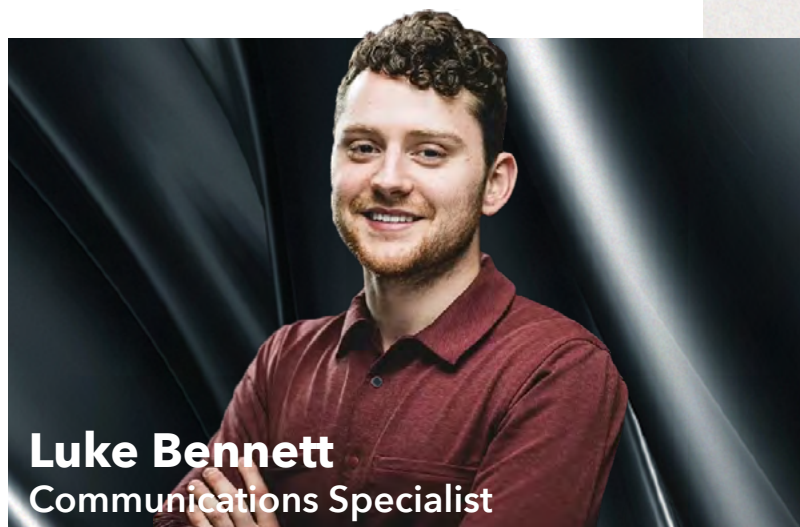
CAREERS IN SPORTS: PR & Comms

you see on the news or social media after the match comes from these press conferences.

If you're interested in working in pro sports communications, it's worthwhile to look for colleges and universities with public relations and sports management programs. Spirit External Communications Manager Sam Pittman attended the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and graduated with degrees in Media and Journalism as well as Exercise and Sport Science in 2020.

While in school, Sam completed public relations internships with a local nonprofit organization as well as with Jordan Brand and learned a lot about the best ways to effectively communicate key messages with a variety of audiences and promote a business's success. Working internships in conjunction with public relations and communications courses are the best way to gain experience in the industry and are very effective in readying you for a full-time job.

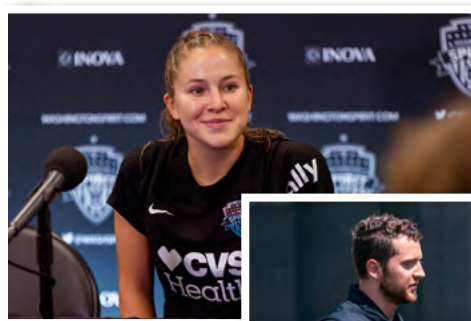
Spirit Communications Specialist, Luke Bennett, attended school not too far away from the Spirit at American University where he studied journalism. Luke is a case study in getting hands on experience in many different realms of communications. In college, he interned with American University's athletic department, the Washington Capitals,



Luke Bennett
Communications Specialist

the Washington Commanders, and even the Washington Spirit during the team's 2021 Championship season. After graduating American in May 2022, he moved to New Jersey where he worked with the New York Jets as a Seasonal Communications Assistant getting hands on experience in one of the biggest sports markets in the country.

Next time you attend a Spirit match at Audi Field, look up into the press box above the southeast corner of the field and you'll probably see your favorite team's comms crew!





Spring Classic

- Travel level tournament
- Occurs annually, middle of March each year.
- U9-19 boys and girls teams.

Coastal Kickfest

- RECREATION and Advanced Rec. level tournament
- Occurs annually, mid of May each year.
- U9-19 boys and girls teams.

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- Travel level tournament
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- U9-19 boys and girls teams.

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 MARCH 23-24, 2024
 COLUMBIA, MD
 GIRLS U09-U19

SAC COLUMBIA INVITATIONAL
 MAY 25-27, 2024
 COLUMBIA, MD
 BOYS & GIRLS U08-U19

BE ELITE



GET TO KNOW: Spirit Players' Favorite Halloween Candy

While you enjoyed the mountain of candy you collected while Trick-or-Treating, did you have a favorite? Are you a candy corn aficionado or do you prefer a classic chocolate bar? We asked our players what their favorite treats are:

Sam Staab: M&Ms

Ashley Hatch: Candy Corn

Annaig Butel: Nerds

Ouleymata Sarr: Hersheys

Dorian Bailey: Milky Way

Bayley Feist: Sour Patch Kids

Maddie Elwell: Snickers

Nicole Barnhart: Twix

Marissa Sheva: Twix



COLLEGE PREP: Choosing A School

Choosing the right college can be stressful. Too many variables, too many choices, and too much pressure. The first thing you need to do is remember: This is YOUR journey. It can and will vary from your best friend's, your teammate's, and your sibling's experience.

Keep in mind that if you want to play college soccer, you will be a **student-athlete**. See how "student" comes first? When choosing a school, you need to consider your entire experience there rather than just the soccer program. If you remove soccer from consideration, would you still choose that school?

Think about what type of school matches your personality, lifestyle, and needs. Schools can vary widely from the number of students to location to teaching styles.

Are you open to moving across the country or do you want to be closer to home? Would you like to meet new people every day or would you rather see familiar faces on campus? Do you prefer small class sizes or large lectures?

Additionally, you need to consider your desired academic path and future profession. Want to be a nurse? Maybe a liberal arts college that doesn't offer a nursing degree isn't the right choice. Prefer to study to Russian literature? Maybe a state university without a Slavic Studies department isn't the right fit.

Remember, keeping up with your schoolwork and succeeding in the classroom is essential to remaining eligible to play, managing your stress, and balancing your schedule.

And last but not least, you'll need to consider what level of soccer you want to play. In the NCAA, divisions vary in how many soccer scholarships are available, how much practice time is required weekly, how robust off-season training is, and more. Be sure you understand these differences and are realistic about the commitment you want to make to the sport when weighing your options.

Here are the different levels of soccer across the U.S. college system:

NCAA:

DI: 347 women's & 211 men's teams

DII: 261 women's & 205 men's teams

DIII: 429 women's & 412 men's teams

NAIA:

206 women's & 204 men's teams

NJCAA:

230 women's & 246 men's teams

Club:

Most universities offer club soccer, which allows you to keep playing organized soccer in a more relaxed setting.





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Why It's Worth Becoming a Spirit Season Ticket Member

You've seen our players on [buses, metro stations, digital billboards and bike shares](#) across the District. Now see them play every match at Audi Field in 2024 with a season ticket membership at a new, lower per match price.

Becoming a season ticket holder not only secures your tickets to every match, but also unlocks a plethora of member benefits including discounts on Spirit merch, invites to exclusive events, an annual membership gift, a dedicated service representative, and more!

To celebrate the dedication and support fans like you have shown throughout the 2023 season, the Spirit is offering a limited time offer: buy one 2024 season ticket membership, get another 50% off in select sections.

Tickets start at just \$12 per match. Help fill Audi Field for every match next season while enjoying the best prices, benefits, events, and more!

LEARN MORE

2024 BENEFITS



13 Regular season home matches



Spirit merch discount



Playoff ticket priority



Annual membership gift



Dedicated membership services rep



Interest free payment plans



Exclusive events



Avoid online ticket fees



Online ticket management tool



And more



The NWSL Draft Explained

Since the NWSL's inception in 2013, clubs have selected new players to join their team through the league's annual Draft. To be eligible for selection, players must register for the Draft and meet eligibility requirements including being at least 18 years old, having never previously signed a professional contract, and either exhausting or renouncing college eligibility for the next year.

Additionally, the league will host the Expansion Draft on December 15 as Bay FC and Utah Royals FC are set to join the NWSL in 2024. Rather than only selecting amateur players to fill out their rosters, the two clubs will be able to choose athletes who currently play on other teams. Additional rules and eligibility requirements limit which players from which teams are allowed to be chosen.

Spirit Draft Picks through the Years

2023

F Nicole Douglas* (26)
GK Lyza Bosselmann* (28)
F Riley Tanner* (30)
F Lena Silano* (34)
F Civana Kuhlmann* (37)
D Delaney Graham (40)

2022

F Tinaya Alexander (14)
F Maddie Elwell* (15)
F Lucy Shepherd (23)
F Audrey Harding (38)
D Jordan Thompson (50)

2021

F Trinity Rodman* (2)
F Tara McKeown* (8)
F Anna Heilferty* (19)
GK Sydney Schneider (29)
F Mariana Speckmaier (39)

2020

Ashley Sanchez* (4)

M Natalie Jacobs (13)
M Averie Collins (17)
F Katie McClure (23)
D Kaiya McCullough (32)

2019

M Jordan DiBiasi (3)
D Sam Staab* (4)
D Tegan McGrady (7)
M Dorian Bailey* (8)
M Bayley Feist* (17)

2018

M Andi Sullivan* (1)
M Quinn (3)
D Schuyler DeBree (11)
F Mallory Eubanks (16)
D Brittany Basinger (21)
M Maddie Huster (26)
M Rachel Moore (31)

2017

F Lindsay Agnew (19)

M Meggie D. Howard (29)
M Cameron Castleberry (36)

2016

F Cheyna Williams (7)
F Cali Farquharson (12)
M Alli Murphy (20)
GK Madalyn Schiffel (34)
D Kara Marie Wilson (37)

2015

D Megan Oyster (13)
D Caprice Dydasco (19)
D Whitney Church (30)

2014

F Crystal Dunn (1)
D Molly Menchel (26)
D Shasta Fisher (29)

2013

F Tiffany McCarty (2)
F Caroline Miller (10)
M Holly King (18)
M Colleen Williams (26)

*Denotes player currently on roster.





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SNAPSHOT: Matchday Memories

Have you ever dreamed of walking out on the field with your favorite Spirit player or getting your photo taken on the field at Audi? Through our Matchday Memories, you and your team can have an unforgettable experience at your next Spirit match.

Take a look at the experiences we offered during the 2023 season:

Player Escorts – Walk onto Audi Field next to your favorite Spirit star!

Ball Kids – Be part of the match and serve as a ball kid during a Spirit match.

Goal Photo – Want to know what it's like to be on the field? Take a team photo in front of the goal on the pitch!

Half Time Parade – Have you ever dreamed of being cheered by a whole stadium? This is your chance! March around Audi Field, wave to fans, and soak in the atmosphere!

Penalty Kicks – Do you have what it takes to score? Do you want to have fun on the pitch! This is the one for you!!

Spirit Tunnel – Experience the excitement and hype of pregame as your group welcomes the starters of both teams onto the pitch prior to the match!



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